Thank you very much. I am delighted to be here and very much appreciate the opportunity to offer remarks at an event that highlights the innovation and drive of our energy workforce.  I want to thank Entergy and Southwire for all of their help in assisting with this event. We felt that it was extremely important to bring attention to how their work here in Louisiana contributes to America's effort to strengthen the Nation's electric infrastructure.

The Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability leads the Department of Energy's efforts to modernize the electric grid through the development and implementation of national policy pertaining to electric grid reliability. We manage the research, development, and demonstration activities for 'next generation' electric grid infrastructure technologies.

As I’m sure most of you are aware, electricity demand in the United States is projected to grow approximately 40% over the next 25 years. At the DOE, we’re committed to making sure the nation’s electric infrastructure is capable of staying ahead of that demand curve.

As you would expect, this will be an ongoing challenge; particularly in our large cities. But it can be done. Recent advancements in electric grid technology are nothing short of astonishing, as we are increasingly seeing the best and brightest minds applying themselves to the hardware and software that comprise and enable our electric delivery systems. It is therefore incumbent upon all of us to work cooperatively to see these new technologies go from concept to reality.

And that's why I am so pleased to have the opportunity to announce this award – particularly in The City of New Orleans.

Every utility in the country strives to reliably deliver electric power and quickly restore service in the wake of an outage. Those challenges are always daunting, but probably never more so than in this region of the nation.

So I want to thank Entergy for their work and applaud them for their innovation. This is the right kind of step at the right time.

Now I'd like to say a few words about this project. On June 27, 2007, Secretary Bodman announced that DOE will

provide up to $51.8 million for five cost-shared projects that will help accelerate much-needed modernization of our Nation’s electricity grid. The selected demonstrations will help advance the future generation of power delivery equipment and aid the development of a highly efficient electricity grid system for the Nation.

When we reviewed these applications, Entergy and Southwire’s project stood out. Their project will utilize the innovative Triax high-temperature superconducting cable to solve a real world load growth problem in the New Orleans area.

In addition, this research will advance the development and application of high-temperature superconductors (HTS), which have the potential to alleviate congestion on an

electricity grid that is experiencing increased demand from consumers. This particular HTS cable will be in excess of one mile in length, and just happens to be almost 3x as long as any previous HTS cable in the world.

High-temperature superconductors make it possible to conduct electricity with out resistance. They offer the potential to dramatically re-shape the nature of the electrical grid. HTS cables, with their increased efficiency, also have the potential to reduce the amount of electricity lost in transmission and distribution.

These attributes make the superconducting technology an attractive investment for industry, and the use of it will enable Entergy to inject much needed power at the legacy distribution voltage (13.8 kV) level.  It will also help to

avoid the siting of new underground transmission (230 kV) and construction of a new high voltage step-down station. With this technology, Entergy will be able to leverage existing assets to improve overall network efficiency.

High-temperature superconductors are a technology whose time is coming. The nation’s consumers will benefit as it is deployed to modernize the U.S. electric grid. This will be the first implementation of the technology in the world to solve such a problem.

We live in a global economy and the High-temperature superconducting industry will play a major role on the international stage. Thanks in part to innovation such as that demonstrated by Entergy and Southwire, the United

States is the leader in this new technology and the Department of Energy is proud to be a supporter.

So thank you to Entergy and Southwire for your vision and contributions, and again thank you for the opportunity to say a few words here today. Thanks to Louisiana Public Service Commission Chairman Jay Blossman. DOE is excited about the progress being made with these cable projects and looks forward to continued successes with partnerships and industry.